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CHAMPA

A Short Sketch of Her Historical Evolution Based on Architectural Ruins

BY

SWAMI SADANANDA

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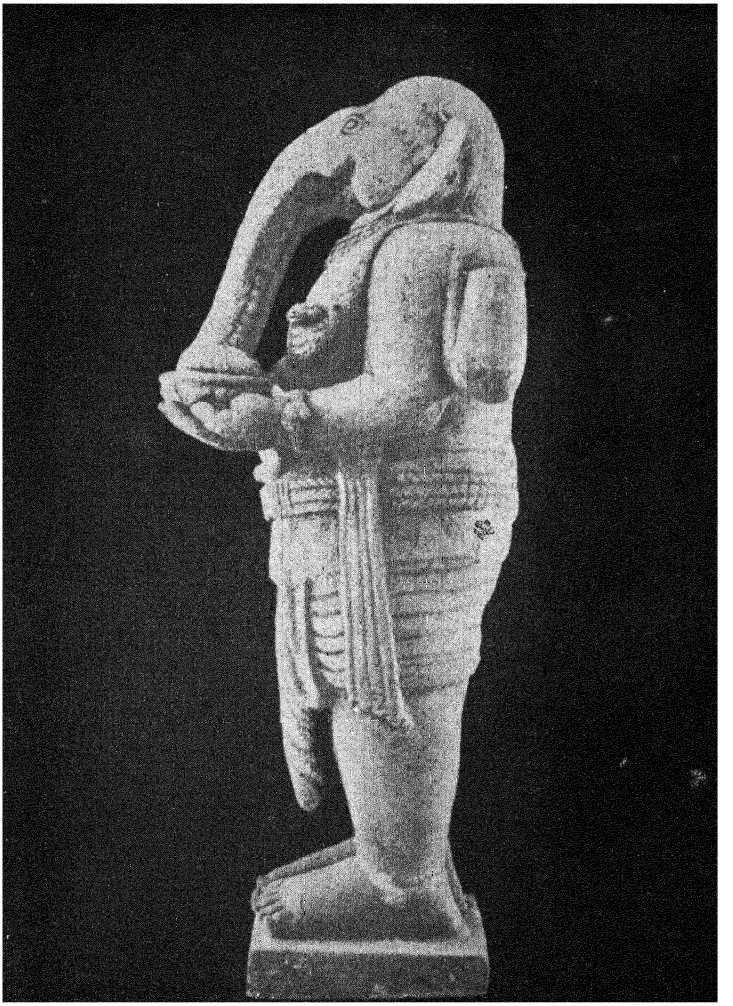

GANESHA

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A BAS-RELIEF

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FOREWORD

Swami Sadananda, the learned author of this interesting study of Champa, has earned competence to write on this subject not only by his painstaking investigations into the history of Greater India but also by his several visits to its various constituent parts, like Annam, Cambodia, Sumatra, Java, Bali etc. He was thus able to study the monuments of these lands first hand with an appreciative and at the same time a critical eye. His numerous articles on allied subjects in news papers and periodicals have shown that he has derived the fullest advantages from his long and intimate contact with these countries and his present publication on Champa is a further indication of his earnestness. Dr. R. C. Mazumdar's works on the same subject, published more than a decade ago, treated the various problems connected with it with a great wealth of details and scholarship. But to those who will not be able to go through that scholarly volume and to many others this handy little book on Champa will be of immense value for knowing a good deal about this ancient land.

Champa 'roughly corresponds to the present province of Annam (excluding Ton-Kin and French Cochin-China) with the exception of the three northern districts, Thana Hoa, Nghe An and Ha Tinh'. This tract was originally inhabited by the Chams who belonged to

Austronesian Stock. It is probable that its population originally contained some Chinese elements, but if there were any, these were completely submerged by a newer element which the Chams derived from their important neighbour on the west—the great land of Bharatavarsa.

India played a glorious part in extending her—cultural influence over this country through successive batches of some intrepid colonists, who from the second or the third century A. D. to the fifteenth century A. D. when the land was conquered by the Annamites, played the most dominant rôle in her political and cultural history. The Indians were not, however, birds of passage and they did not go there merely to exploit the country for their own gain. They settled there, thoroughly identified themselves with the children of the soil and cast in their lot with that of the previous settlers. The latter too gladly surrendered to their alien masters and were thoroughly Hinduised. It is, thus, not so much the cultural history of the original Chams that we have to study in the land of Champa as the civilisation and culture of India in a new and favourable setting. We do not fail to recognise there the manners, customs, language and religion of the Indians which were given a little orientation in the course of their being acclimatised on a foreign soil. Thus if we take stock of a few details concerned with the above, we cannot but be struck with the great resemblance between the Hinduised Cham culture and its parent. The dress of the people about which we get an idea from the various extant monuments in the country shows that like the generality of the Indians,

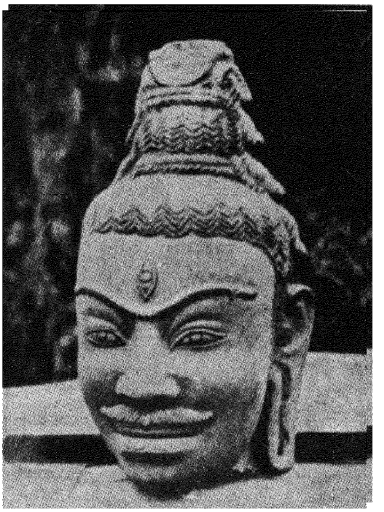
the Chams used to cover the portion of their body below the waist line with tastefully designed clothing and like the Indians again they used to decorate the upper part of their body with beautiful ornaments. Marriage among them—specially among those that were highly placed in society—was held as a sacred inviolable bond as in India ; the details of this ceremony as recorded in relevant ancient Chinese texts strongly remind us of the same in an Indian one. The practice of Sati was in vogue among the higher classes as in India. A good many of the Hindu rites and festivals were observed at Champa. Different methods of disposal of the dead such as cremation, the practice of the exposure of the dead body, were known there and the funeral ceremonies are dimly reminiscent of the Indian ones. Cultured people there used Sanskrit language and as the epigraphic records uptil the tenth century fully prove that classical Sanskrit literature was particularly studied by many among the higher classes. In fact what literature was there was in Sanskrit and we are not aware of the existence of any indigenous literature if there were any at all from any source.

Brahmanical sectarian religions of India like Saivism, Vaishnavism and Buddhism introduced by the Indian colonists found a ready recognition among the children of the soil ; not only Brahma, Vishnu and Siva—the orthodox Brahmanical triad—were objects of high veneration among them, but also the minor Hindu divinities like Indra, Yama, Chandra and a host of others were held in high esteem.

Swami Sadananda has treated many of these details with a zeal and earnestness which would recommend his work to every one. He got much valuable assistance in the pursuit of his work from such eminent French savants like Dr. Goloubew and Mons. J. T. Claeys, who helped him in studying the ruins of Champa and seeing over the museums, for which he is much thankful to them. He offers also his utmost good wishes to the Indian residents of Champa—the Sindhis and the Chettiyars whose unfailing hospitality stood him in such good stead during his peregrinations in this country. Lastly his cordial thanks are due to two other gentlemen for the great help they rendered him in publishing his work. Mr. K. C. De, as he had done while the author's Suvarnadwipa was being sent to the press, had kindly helped him by carefully revising the manuscript and making it ready for the press; while Mr. Prafulla Kumar Das has taken great trouble in reading the proofs.

Calcutta University
28. 8. 38

Jitendra Nath Banerjea



SIVA

By the courtesy of M. Paul Mus

AVALOKITESVARA

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CHAMPA

Definite proofs cannot be adduced but from an analytical study of the somatic and linguistic affinities of diverse races in different parts of the globe, ethnographists conclude that the pre-historic man had always been on the move. Whenever he found a better and a more secured prospect of satisfying his physiological and economic needs, he quitted his old habitat without regret and marched with his group to a new region. The idea of nationalism or territorial patriotism has been the outcome of a much later epoch in socio-political evolution, when duties incumbent on him began to include the preservation of race-culture. A cynical disregard for the existing rights of another group specially if the latter were less-armed and worse-placed in the method of self-defence, was evinced by the early man in the very same manner as his civilised descendants often betray in their programme of ambitious aggrandisement. Thus many are the instances where the weak were butchered in toto, chased out of their occupation, forced to fly into mountainous recesses or swallowed up by inter-marriage. This last alternative, i.e., fusion was only possible for those who had certain similarities, whether in speech, method of living or in the form of worship. If it was a

mere physical attraction, only women were allowed to live, while the male population was decimated. In any case the conquering group imposed its manners and customs and more often than not built up its glory and tradition on the remnants of what they pillaged.

If this be the ethnographic sketch of any land, we find that it fits in admirably with the ancient and mediæval days of Champa or Annam. This double denomination is in itself suggestive. To-day the map of the eastern part of French Indo-China only indicates Annam, but there is no means of pointing out that on the same soil for a space of five or six centuries, was founded, governed and finally lost a glorious empire—a people whose descendants now live mostly in South Annam and who are called the Chams.

Ethnically speaking, the Chams like the Annamites originated from the Ocenians, who comprised diverse types of humanity hailing at different periods from all quarters of the earth. They migrated through Egypt and Mesopotamia, halted in the Indus valley and finally swarmed to countries and islands on the Pacific board. They sponsored some five thousand years ago a civilisation, the relics of which abound in the mausoleums of the Pharaohs and in the cities which once stood on the environment of Harappa and Mohenjodaro. Those who stuck to the mainland of Asia earned the appellation of the Indonesians. That a branch of the latter was to be found near Tonkin in the neolithic age has been definitely

established by the discoveries at Bac-Son. During their southward trek they encountered the Thais, a band of Southern Mongoloids who occupied the Yang-tse valley originally, but moved to further south along the coast. These won the generic nomenclature 'Indo-Chinese', of whom the Annamites kept to the border territories of the south of China, the Chams to the maritime districts, the Cambodian-Khmers to the grassy plane in the centre, while an offshoot, ethnically more complex, penetrated into the south-easternmost peninsula of Asia.

Negroid irruptions were not infrequent, for the fertile deltas of the Menam, the Mekong and the Song-Kai attracted the island-hordes from Polynesia. Some of them interbred with the Thais and retained their phonetic peculiarities; some others were under the sway of Champa in her palmy days and still display a marked influx of Cham vocabulary in their tongue; the rest were dispossessed of their fertile land and driven to mountain fastnesses; where they maintain even now their primitive habits. These savages are known as Mois in Annam.

Linguistically the Chams are unlike the Annamites. They are more akin to the Cambodian-Khmers and the Malayas, whereas the Annamite dialect has been derived from the same source as the Thai-Tibeto-Burman-Siamese group. Probably the Chams were more vigorous than their sister-tribes when they fused with the Thais. They only took the daughters of the Thais which account

for the Mongolic features of the Chams, but the Annamites gave their women to the conquerors, whose idioms they borrowed in exchange.

For their religion, the Chams shared with the Annamites their devotion to spirits, which they inherited from their Indonesian fore-fathers. To this they added the Thaic reverence for ancestors. The starting point in both these cults must have been the outcome of a search for the primordial cause of all. It was traced in one case to the fecundity of the soil and in the other to human parents. From the soil, a step ahead led them to the latent power which produced its fertility. To satisfy a crude mind some graphic representation was needed and the stone being more durable than the clay was commandered as its emblem. The Mongol mind worked in a similar groove and the departed spirit of a beloved forbear filled the place of the Authority behind, which soon developed into an osseous symbol. Whether the Linga creed of a much later epoch exercised a similar effect on Cham mentality or not will be discussed later on, but suffice it to say that inspite of ethnic affinity and religious bond we find the Chams and Annamites, were constantly at war with one another for economic reasons. Of any pre-historic alliance between them we can say nothing, but within the memory of history we have only one instance when both these races buried their private feuds and presented a united front to their common enemy. It

was when they jointly crushed the five battalions of Koublai Khan.

To an entirely strange set of people the Chams and most of their affiliated tribes owe their cultural evolution. These men were dissimilar to them racially and mentally ; yet they wielded a tremendous influence on all the south-eastern inhabitants of Asia. They flooded with their civilisation all those benighted people who lived in the tract that lay between the Bay of Bengal and the Gulf of Tonkin, including the islands of the Indian Archipelago and transformed them into glorious nations, whose architectural evidences still display themselves significantly through the corridor of time as some of the most admirable creations of man. Brahma, Syama, Malaya, Javadvipa, Bali, Sumatra, Kamboja and Champa might have been eponyms given by these people, whose intellectual movement radiated from the Aryavarta to the Dakshinapatha and from there to all these territories. It was the Sanskritic adventurers of Bharatabarsha, who were responsible for the spiritual, intellectual and moral uplift of their neighbours as much as for the latter's material prosperity. The Indo-Aryans attempted no physical subjugation of any race ; their colonisation was not synonymous with the exploitation of indigenous resources which would prove in the long run detrimental to the inferior race. Theirs was no sanguinary march of a victorious Alexander, who devastated everything but constructed nothing in its

wake. On the contrary theirs was a triumphant march of a massive intellect whose guiding philosophy was to impart knowledge to the backward. Thus their chastened vehicle of expression, their incomparable literature both sacred and secular and their progressive science became eventually the mainstay of the advancement of the countries of their adoption. They taught their subordinate folks the art of government, the science of architecture and the improved method of agriculture. It was under Hindu tutelage that some of the maritime people learned the technic of navigation; it was under their ægis that the coastal people developed to such an extent the sea borne trade that the peninsula of Malaya found a new denomination, namely 'Golden Chersonese' from the ancient Europeans. If the Hindus could lend their scripts to the Eastern Islanders and if they could stretch their cultural influence through Micronesia and Guatemala to the Mayas of the New Hemisphere, we can easily imagine how deeply must they have affected the social structures of those who lived next door to them. Their missionary activities were of a peaceful nature. They used no sword to effect conversion to their creeds and military aggrandisement was never associated with their religious domination. It was based on the sympathetic acceptance of a superior intelligence for the betterment of the race. Sheer brute force was avoided and conciliatory gesture was employed or a small body of pioneers like Agastya and his disciples who voyaged to distant

lands would have been crushed and their attempts forgotten instead of being reverently cherished to this day.

Historically, the first Hindu monument in Champa is the pillar of Vo-canh which was discovered near Nah-trang in the South. The inscription takes us back to the second century A.D., but there must have been some earlier tokens of Indian civilisation which have perished. The eminent French palæographer Mons. J. Y. Claeys is of opinion that of 250 architectural remains in Annam to-day, there are only a few which will assist the historian to reconstruct the annals of Hindu Champa. The rest offer too little material, crumbling to dust as they are, to be of any use. Hence there is nothing against our assumption that the Hindu influence in Champa must have commenced at least by the time of Asoka, if not earlier. In 137 A.D., we gather from the Chinese records, the Champites organized armed attacks on the military post on the frontiers of China. They stormed the station, killed the officer-in-charge and burnt down all the strongholds. It perturbed the Mongol Emperor so much that he sent his famous general Ma-Vin to reorganize the southern defence. The Chinese commander won his laurels in his fight against the Trung sisters but found the subjugation of the Champites a tougher problem. He was kept busy in repulsing the systematic bombardment of his frontier at Je-Nan and these skirmishes only ceased after 55 years when the whole province was annexed to the kingdom of Champa under Lien. It is

not possible from the Sino-Annamese phonetics to deduce if the name Lam-ap or Lien was of a Sanskritic origin, or whether it formed the part of the ruler's title. After the addition of this new province of Naht-nam ⟨or Je-nan⟩ in the north, Champa extended the whole littoral from Porte d' Annam ⟨or the Annam Gate⟩ to the Cape of Panduranga in the south. Their outpost must have included the fort of Kisu-Sou the ruins of which are still seen near Hue. The Sanskritic names of the southern districts, Vijaya Kauthara and Amaravati suggest that the Hinduised monarchs thought it safe to shift their political centre of gravity away from the Annamites if not from the Chinese. Hence Simhapura ⟨which historians identify with Tara-Kieu⟩ was made the capital of the kingdom, on account of its central position.

In a Chinese traveller's diary we meet with an account of this ancient capital of Champa in the eighth century. It stood on the bend of a river which served it as its commercial highway and gave it an appearance of a port-town. The periphery was eight odd lis, which was marked by a brick-wall with built-in gateways opening on the strand. What struck our diarist as odd was the absence of a gate in the south, a practice contrary to the Chinese conventions of city-building. There were several assembly-halls and palaces, all made of bricks. The town had, besides, ridge-like terraces with overhanging turrets which seemed to the Buddhistic traveller as pagoda pradakshinapathas. The town had eight

important places of worship which contained images of gold and silver. Knowing as we do of the broad tolerance the Hindus displayed towards other cults, we are tempted to surmise that of these eight temples at least a few were devoted to Sakti-worship. (This is also borne out by the images of the ten-handed Durgamurti and Uma). The town had to be well-protected, for the Annamites were ever-ready to swoop down upon it for pillage. The Chams were not less ready to retaliate; they too, used every opportunity to march up to the Annamite capital for spoliation.

This constant tension led to the demolition of Simhapura by the Annamites beyond recognition. Inspite of the Chinese description and the pillar-inscription found at Mi-son, it taxed all the ingenuity of scholars of world-wide reputation, like Louis Finot and J. Y. Claeys, to establish beyond doubt the identity of Simhapura with the excavated site near Tra-Kieu, and to finally clear away the mystery connected with the Dong-Duong pedestal which claimed Indrapura as its Capital. The ancient Champa had to remove her capital at least three times,—once in 446, again in 605 and perhaps for the last time in 982 A.D. Simhapura like our Delhi might have had a previous counterpart at Naht-Nam, where the Chinese military post was burnt down in the second century A.D. But she had to give way to Indrapura, which again had to be replaced by Vijaya, near modern Binh-Dinh.

Near the last mentioned town we have one of the last strongholds of old Champa. In an excavation carried in 1934 A.D., Mons. J. Y. Claeys has after a herculean effort, discovered near Cha-ban ⟨or Binh-Dinh⟩ huge sandstone blocks of the middle period of Cham architecture. Perhaps the construction of the monument, of which these blocks are relics, began when Vijaya had already been selected as the capital of Champa. For Jayavarman VII of Camboja ⟨Cambodia⟩ wished to punish the king of the Chams and inaugurated a thirty-year Khmer government at Vijaya, which continued to be the seat of the Cham rule, to the last.

Indian inspiration in all branches of art can be easily traced in the relics of Cham culture which adorn the various museums of Annam to-day. It was however never followed, rigidly—a trait which shows the flexibility of Cham temperament. It strove to create something new and mostly succeeded in producing gorgeous objects of art. In architecture the Hindu canons were followed in broad outlines but the Khmer and the Chinese technics were imitated in a manner suitable to their own national style. The evidences in brick and mortar can still be viewed ; but except a few gold and silver wares here and there, we have to satisfy ourselves with the lists of gifts donated by rulers, inscribed on the gateways to temples.

Justice can hardly be done to the progress of the Chams during their ascendency, unless we are prepared

to take into account the troublesome days through which they carried on their programme of national awakening and culture. From the fifth to the tenth centuries they must have been busy in laying the foundation of their artistic works and in accumulating wealth through commercial pursuits. The next four hundred years, they were occupied with putting their own house in order. Never were they free from sporadic invasions which their accumulated treasure invited. Thrice had they to rebuild their capitals and re-arrange their defences. They must have had enormous recuperative power or they would have long ago vanished from the face of the earth. If the Annamites kept them busy in the north, the Cambodians were always on the alert to pounce upon the unguarded territories in the south. These skirmishes on the frontiers naturally weakened the state and provincial revolts against the central authority were not also infrequent. For all these, the Chams had to thank themselves. Their quality as fighters need not be doubted nor their seamanship. But in diplomacy they were bankrupts. Their generals spoiled the success of their arms by not following a crushing victory to its conclusion while the Cham monarch impaired their foreign relations by a most short-sighted policy. Instead of entering into a defensive alliance with China against the Annamites, they often would imprison the Imperial envoys to their Court or add fresh insults by sending as tributes the spoils of their high-sea robbery. It

was too late when the idea of defensive alliance with China dawned on Cham statesmen. It is surmised that the Celestial Emperor was half-hearted in his attempt to save Champa while she was in her last throes before the Annamite conqueror. It was natural for a munificent overlord like the Chinese Emperor to desire for one less undesirable among his vassals, who never appreciated the kind and benign treatment of their grand seigneur.

To this we may add the follies which kings like Simhavarman committed. At the beginning of the 14th century this monarch, getting tired of his Malayan consort, sought the hands of a beautiful Annamese princess, the 'Pearly Jet'. For marrying her Simhavarman readily parted with two rich provinces of Champa. The king soon died and the Annamese princess like Marie Louise after the downfall of the first Napoleon, returned to her father's court, who however kept a tight grip over the ceded territory.

The last ruler to sit on the throne of Champa was Le-thanh-ton. In 1471 A.D. he had to pay the penalty his predecessor Che-bong-ga had incurred. The latter had carried the war into the Annamite capital, destroyed its citadel and died fighting on his war-vessel, on the eve of his victory. The Annamites now retaliated by taking Le-thanh-ton prisoner at Vijaya. They massacred the Chams. Thousands of the conquered were expatriated to the sparsely populated districts of north Annam. The rest fled for protection to the extreme south and a few

saved themselves by crossing the Cambodian frontiers. Cities were foraged, temples and repositories looted, valuable archives burnt down, works of art destroyed or transferred to the seat of the conqueror, magnificent buildings pulled down to supply materials for Annamite structures, what more, women and Indian priests were marched as chained gangs of malefactors to the capital of the Annamese. Thus ended a glorious kingdom and also a people who are to-day found in motely crowds and to whom the stories of their past reach to-day in a garbled Islamic version.

Climatic conditions contribute a good deal to the cultural efflorescence of a country but ultimately help the decay of its achievements. Champa, as she lay within the monsoon area beneath a tropical sky, with an extensive seaboard intended with fertile deltas to the east and a cord of high hills to the west, soon became a suitable receptacle of the advanced ideas of the Hindus. But her very prosperity rendered her a constant battle ground between her people and the Annamites. Were her people politically as capable as they were artistically developed, they would have still retained the possession of Champa and her traditions.

What with the vandalism of her conqueror and what with the prolific growth of nature around her the re-construction of her past glory has become an extremely difficult task. It is a great credit to the learned members of École Française d'Extreme-Orient that

they have taken all the troubles of penetrating into dense jungles infested with poisonous insects and reptiles, to restitute to the Chams their cultural attempts. In those days they used a vegetable liquid for cementing the brick structure of their temples and palaces and these have aided the growth of towering trees the thick cord-like roots of which have clawed into cracked masonry work. Probably these buildings were already stormed by invaders and shattered to pieces, which have been reduced to crumbling mass by the ravages of time. Besides the Chams extensively employed burnt bricks in their artistic creations, which naturally fail to stand the inclemency of weather as much as the standstone pillars with which they built the entrance to these temples or palaces. These burnt-bricks were of a large size called mandarins and were employed along with baked clay for the bulk of masonry work as they were more pliable to chisels. But idols, corner-angles and pedestals were made of grit-stone which allowed sharp profiles. The Khmer architect originally built wholly with bricks : later on, they, used hard stones like blue sand-stone, but eventually took to laterite only. The only point of grace has been that most of their inscriptions were engraved on rocky materials and therefore were more enduring. To rebuild these remains is tedious at its best : it requires dexterity as well as a thorough knowledge of the Chams' now-lost science of erection, let alone the artistic tempera-

ment without which the task of reconstruction cannot be brought to a fruitful issue. Hence we cannot but admire the phalanx of savants like MM. Louis Finot, Aurousseau, Claeys, Golubew, Mus and others to whom the world is indebted for the light thrown on the vanished civilisation of a decadent race.

These pioneers had to brave the dangers of overgrown tropical countrysides, away from the world of civilisation with no possible conveyance : at any moment they might be cut off from the world outside : they risked contracting unknown infection and incurring the displeasure of unsympathetic tribes. Thus Carpeux died of an undiagnosed disease, while Odend'hal and Commaille fell at the hands of assasins. Yet men like Finot and Lajonquiere trudged for four months the distance between Saigon and Hanoi for archaeological survey. The whole project is perforce expensive as it includes a mobile unit of paraphernalia required for scientific examination of relics in detail.

Indigenous sources such as anecdotes and legends have to be critically studied and can be accepted with great caution. The Annamites of the fifteenth century were not satisfied with pulling down public places and institutions : they set fire to priceless archives containing literature which would have to-day served us invaluable documents for our inquiry into the social organization of the Champites. And what escaped, very little written if at all, degenerated during these centuries into folklores

garbled with anachronism and imaginary events. To extricate authentic incidents from the accumulated mass of myths requires the patience of a Job if not the energy of a Hercules. What has still more complicated the task of people like Father Cadiere is that the Cham traditions after their trek to the South have been buried owing to their conversion to Islamism, under a garbage of Arabian misfits.

The next source of materials from which the history of the old Champa may be reconstituted is of Annamite origin, which has to be minutely checked as it contains the violent denunciation of the conquered or the extravagant praise of the conquerors. It should be collated with what may be obtained from the Chinese records, but none of them can claim an intimate knowledge of the everyday life of Champa and can only shed oblique light on matters arising out of political and commercial relations. The Chinese can be relied upon so far as they deal with the Champa-Annamite struggle, but where they are themselves concerned we should admit their version with a grain of salt. Then again their hieroglyphs require concurrent accounts for their proper transliteration. Save and except some cursory remarks of a traveller or a trader we have hardly any definite premises to base our socio-religious deductions regarding Champa architectural findings.

In face of these obstacles, the personnel of the École Française d'Extreme-Orient must be congratulated for

SIVA TEMPLE
PANDURANGA

SIMHAPURA

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their stupendous results which required not only a facile pen but the clever handling of a spade as well. The French Government have taken Curzonian strides towards the proper conservation of old monuments by forbidding their removal until a body of experts under the guidance of the École Director has examined them. Any fresh finding has to be immediately reported and their export without a Government permit is banned. The authorities have spared funds as well, for, the whole of Indo-China is dotted to-day with beautiful museums that have become now the classified repositories and archives of all relics. Out of 250 groups of ruins only a few have been made to tell their stories and these too would have remained silent were it not for the labour of the savants attached to the École. Nor do these scholars limit their activities within the boundary of the French possessions in Asia but often they visit other lands where similar work is being carried on. Only seven years ago MM. Finot and Goloubew found their way to Ceylon for studying at first hand the archæological technics of the Singhalese. In return they invited persons of kindred science to their libraries and museums.

It must, however, be pointed out in this connection, a fundamental limit to these researches, which in our opinion is natural and not intentional. One will agree with us that the study of the internal evolution, social or religious, of any race cannot be sufficiently accurate unless it is interpreted from the view point of the people

that constitute the race. Megasthenes was on a political mission to the Court of Chandragupta and he could only lay stress on the state affairs of the Mauryan Emperor. Fa-Hien was primarily a Buddhist scholar who interested himself only in the magnificence of the creed he professed. It would not be possible for either of them to speak authoritatively and without bias on the mysticism of the contemporary Hindu Cult or the intricacy of social customs, prevailing then. In dim reflections of Champa's past it is naturally difficult to the exteme for scholars whose formative years have been spent in an environment upholding the ethic standards of ancient Judea to enter intimately into the esoterism of the Phallic doctrine introduced by the Hindu Saivites into this ancient kingdom. Inspite of its superficial resemblance to the osseous symbols of spirit or ancestor-worship of the pre-Hindu Champa the Linga-creed of the Indians had no other likeness. Those who have probed beneath the surface of any school of religious teaching founded by the Indians, have been surprised to discover that often a gross emblem has been concocted to hide their deep reverence for the Supreme Being. We need not enter into the details of the worship of the Lord Siva in the form of a Linga, but it would be sufficient for our purpose to hint at the central theme of this doctrine, namely, that the eternal cycle of destruction and creation is a manifest phase of the Ultimate Authority and that it has nothing of that crudeness of procreation which may

be associated with the Spirit of Soil theory as suggested by M. Paul Mus. Further, the religious psychology of the Indians would deem its profanity and irreverence to identify a holy image with its royal donor. It is probable that the present Chams would explain that the idol in any of the extant temples is really a stone figure of its royal founder of the by-gone days, but they would be mistaken. The name of the temple-builder is mentioned as a devotee of the Lord that is to be worshipped there. Thus Indreswara Siva would mean Siva who was the master of a king called Indra. Still oftner would we come across the Lord (or the Lady, if a goddess) of a place as the style of the image in the place of devotion by the person endowing it signified that the god or goddess was perforce the protector of the people living in that region. A similar mistake would occur, if the Statute of 'Our Saviour' or of the 'Blessed Virgin' is confused with the donor. Lastly, the love of mysticism has often led the Aryans to use words of double-entendre in their scriptures and literature. The story of Cham edition of the Aryan Indra or the Roman Jupiter has been primarily derived from an ambiguous phrase like "Ahalyajaraindra," where the Ahalyajara signified "the slayer of the night," Indra being synonymous with Surya or the Sun in the Vedas. These discrepancies can be removed only by systematic interpretations from the Sastric point of view and would enable a historian to grasp the true reason for the intellectual domination by

the Hindus over the Chams. And the prayer to the blessed goddess of Kauthara could be only inspired by the teachings of such spiritual master-minds.

Regarding the social history of old Champa we must therefore fall back upon architectural evidences chiefly. The existing stone figures and rock engravings display well-proportioned features though seldom we come across any mascularly developed athletic body. At the same time obese types of humanity are rare. The only corpulent figures are those of the dvar-palas ⟨gate-keepers⟩ and of Siva who always wears a sacred thread. His elephant-headed son has also the same distinctive decoration of a Brahmana (e.g., the seated image now preserved in the Tourane Museum). The standing images show that the Champaites were never very tall, but as there are only a few amusing pygmies, we are led to believe that men and women were generally of medium height. Mostly clean-shaven faces are seen, but a pair of trimmed moustaches ⟨e.g., the disloged head of Siva at Mi-Son⟩ or a pointed Assyrian beard ⟨e.g., the double idol of Po-Nraup⟩ can be occasionally detected. Women had a lothesome but graceful body but never prone to fatness. They wore, as did men, ear-rings, necklaces, armlets, bracelets and girdles. Men however, did not adorn their legs like women with anklets and toe-bells, but both sexes do not appear to use any footwear. Headgears were various and coiffures had different technics of their own.

None of the male figures carry any weapon (except religious emblems like conches, lotuses, wheels, tridents, amulets etc.). That the people had a care-free temperament can be guessed from the optimistic (not the enigmatic smile of Buddha) smile on all statue faces. They were a gay race who loved to dance to the tune of a flute and who could execute most of the classical poses. The Nataraja murti is not wanting either.

From the dedicatory prefaces we learn that Siva was the most prominent of the Aryan trinity. Brahma and Vishnu are also mentioned but are rare like their stony representations. Mostly we find them occupying subservient positions to the Lord of the Lords, whose divine spouse Parvati, and sons Ganesha and Kartikeya had temples built in their honour. The elephant-head of Lambodara is executed with minute details and in his standing position his legs have a swollen appearance. Kartikeya has his divine peacock but Garudas are discovered (not as a carrier) in Siva-temples instead of the usual bull. Brahma in one case (as in the Lingamukham of Trach-pho) is seated on a lotus and a bird, perhaps an imitation of the divine Swan, is seen flying over him. Vishnu in the same group is seated on a Varaha with his chakra, lotus and mace flying about. Whether the Varaha refers to his incarnation as in the case of his Kurmavatara image, we are left to guess, but the theme of depiction is that these two gods are surprised at the appearance of Siva

in his Agnirupam. Whether the Lord of Preservation along with the Lord of Creation are praying to the Lord of Destruction to envelop himself doubly so that the world may be spared from the devastating flame we leave the readers to judge for themselves.

Of the different attributes which naturally accompany these divinities we seldom notice any deviation from the Hindu conceptions. The Brahmanic yajnopavita in some instances is composed of entwined serpents and instead of the customary bow and arrows Skanda is shown with a thunderbolt. The third eye of yogic knowledge is also seen so often that we would like to identify in its absence the double idol of Po-Nraup ⟨mentioned above⟩ leaning against a half-cleft Linga-mukham as Brahma who generally has more than one head. For the same reason we hesitate to identify the negro-lipped flat-nosed two-handed bejewelled fiture of Dong-Duong with Lord Siva. It has neither the sacred thread nor has the jata-like ⟨matted locks⟩ coiffure of other Siva-images. The absence of these emblems are also noticed in the seated Siva of the same place preserved in the Tourane Museum. Sivamurtis on the whole have kindred features to Maheswara images of present Bengal.

It is really marvellous to think that the people of Champa could adapt themselves to the Hindu religious ideals so closely yet preserve their race identity. In none of their murtis anything grotesque or idealistic has

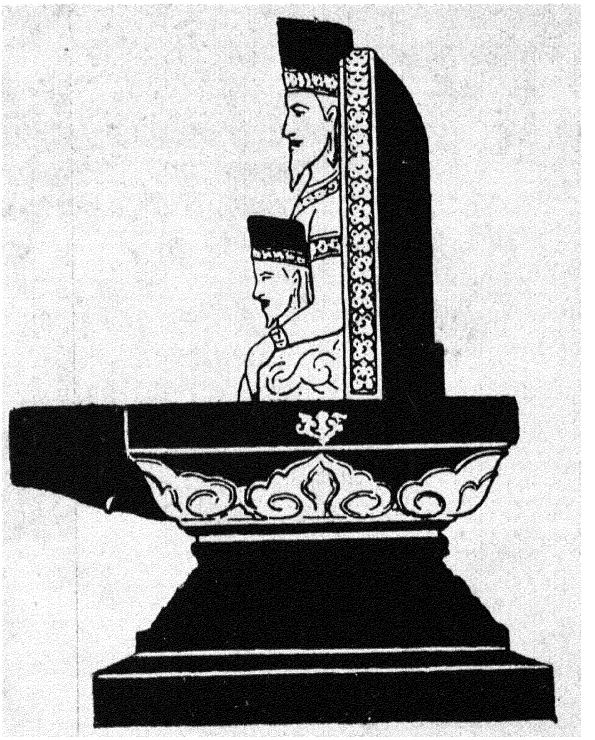
been attempted but on the contrary most of them faithfully adhere to human anatomy in details. Very few we find among these Cham statues who are nude. Most of them are draped in folds of embroidered cloth secured to the waist with bejewelled girdles. All these technics are derived from the Aryan inspiration but all of them have distinct Cham style stamped on them.

Quite a number of animals drew the attention of the Cham artist. Those with whom he was familiar received a faithful representation. Thus elephant and horses, for instance, have been sculptured with minute details. The former often have appeared as the heads of Ganesha as well as wholly, but mostly without tusks. The Tourane museum elephant has a diadem of intricate design to denote its royal patronage and its poise is one of the best craftmanship of Champa. The equestrian figures are taken from a bas-relief on a partition-wall at Da-Han. They represent a couple of youthful Champaites on beautifully caparisoned horses who appear well-looked-after. They too seem enjoying with their masters a game akin to our modern polo. The riders, (the foremost is of tender age and his innocent smile is really captivating) have one hand free probably for reins, the other holding a stick similar to one with which we play hockey. The saddles are placed on a frilled support tied to the carefully-groomed tails of the beasts whose manes are also trimmed.

Perhaps the Cham sculpture never had the chance of

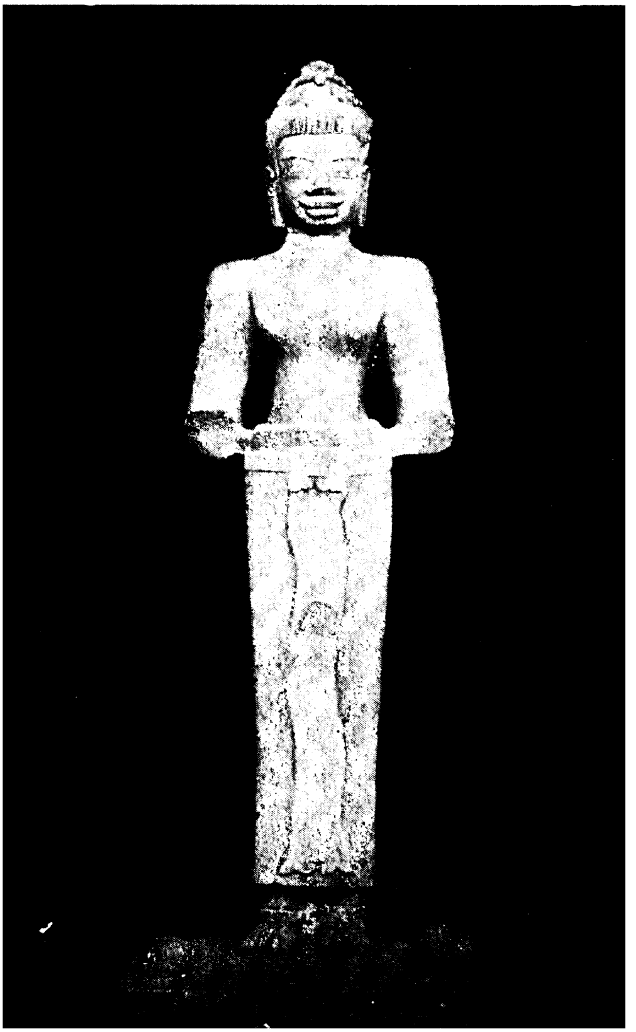
inspecting a peacock or a lion at close quarters. The bird's outspread tail towers high above Kartikeya and its talons are too griffin-like to be natural. The head of the bird is broken, but the portion of the neck which is preserved is rather that of an oversized peacock. The angry lion of Tra-Kieu is more drawn from imagination than sketched from nature. The bird which is seen under Vishnu in the Linga-mukham of Trach-Pho is natural like the bird that flies at the right-hand top over Brahma but lack the usual fineness of the Cham sculptor. Apsaras are quite noble and majestic wherever they appear in temple bases. Of fabulous or Puranic animals the Gajasimhamurti and Makara (excavated at Binh-Dinh recently) have a complicated look. The Makara belongs to a period when the Chinese dragon was making its influence felt in Champa. Garuda, another of the mythical creatures of the Hindus, has also been attempted by the Cham but like its counterpart in the Indian archipelago has been associated with Siva and not with Vishnu. Another animal sculptured by the Cham artist is a monkey which along with an archer strongly reminds us of the epic character of Hanumana before his divine master Ramchandra. Serpents are rare as a motif which abounds in the Khmer country. A very few Sivamurtis have coils of these reptiles in the matted locks, or as armlets and yajnopavitas.

The multiplicity of limbs in seen in a large number of images. The Nataraia image we saw at the niche



DOUBLE IDOL OF PO-NRAUP

By the courtesy of M. Paul Mus



LOKESVARA

By the courtesy of École Française d'Extrême Orient

above the archway to the temple Chuk Ba Thap near Phan Rang ⟨Skt. Panduranga⟩ had six arms. Two of the emblems we could not distinguish from below; perhaps they were folded in yogic mudra, the rest were Trisula, Kharga, Patra and Padma. There is a Durga-murti with ten hands, but the figure of Uma now in Khai Dinh museum has a mother's divine grace. There are no extra physical members and one of her palms as well the tip of her nose is broken. The remaining hand holds a lotus bud probably. Her eyes are closed in a trance and she is seated in a yogic ashana. Possibly she had ornaments in upper and lower arms but only traces are left. She wears a necklace which might well have been lotus plant entwined. Both her headgear and ear-pendants are too massive; perhaps the outer-ring of her mukuta was meant for heavenly lusture or jyoti. The bronze figure of Lakshmi we found elsewhere hailed from South India and the Yaksha ladies from Muthura and Sanchi. Like the gigantic Buddha murti of which the model still rests in the museum of Madras, these figures might have been the part of the spoils of Champa pirates. In this connection we shall do well to remember that the Dakshinapatha did not alone influence the architecture but even Nepal had her share in the Somasutra discovered in one of the Buddhist shrines. This has been conclusively proved by M. Claeys and Dr. Goloubew.

It is suggested that the doctrine of Lord Tathagata preceded the Linga-cult of the saivites which became the

religion of Champa's sovereigns. There are shrines erected at Dung-Duong, My-Due and Di-Huu in honour of Buddha. The first of these had a beautiful Pradakshinapatha with profuse illustrations in stones from the Jatakas. The names at least of the Indian Bhikkus who expounded doctrine of Gautama Siddhartha can still be ascertained with accuracy and we often come across the images of Avalokitesvara and Dhyani Amitava. The object of our rickshaw ride over a distance of 4 kilometres by the beautiful river strand from Hue was to visit the gigantic Buddhamurti in the pagoda of Limmu, where we were surprised to discover a trident in the hand of the Lord of the Buddhists. Perhaps Buddhism which ran contemporaneously with Saivism borrowed some of its emblems. At Nah-trang we have found the image of Sakyamuni hiding the idol of Sri Bhagavati Kautharesvari, but one thing which we could not fail to notice was the absence of the linguistic influence of Pali.

It is suggested that the Linga creed which eventually became the religion of Champa's sovereigns was introduced after Buddhism had captured the mass. Did then the language of the Tripitakas pale before the splendour of Sanskrit which continued to be the court speech till the twelfth century? Or, did the Indian monks preach the esoterics of Nirvana in the tongue of the land ? All the eight petrographs of Po-Nagar covering a period from 739 to 1153 A. D. were in the chastened idiom of the Indo-Aryans, under the aegis of which the Cham verna-

cular received a polished diction and grammatical forms as early as the ninth century to be employed for detailing the gifts to a temple, the names and social ranks of their donors. There is evidence of the great influence the Hindu epopees exerted on the Cham mind, for a poem on the Kaviguru's first outburst in slokas has been discovered. It does not therefore require a long stretch of imagination to conceive that the Cham literature drew largely upon Sanskrit dramas and Kavyas for its inspiration. We know the rituals were conducted later on in an adapted form and to put it to test, we asked a Hindu villager near Phan Rang to recite some mantras. There were Swahas and Swadhas certainly but the rest we could not catch for our ignorance of the Cham tongue.

For the past of Champa the inscriptions of Mi-Son would be of enormous importance. Surrounded by lofty wooded hill, the Champa people thought that their glorious effort of Mi-Son would be safe from the spoliation of foreign foes, the only access to the place being the river Song Thu-bon. Perhaps it was only a summer residence of the monarch and not a temple. But their Hinduised notion could not tolerate that any of their activities should be exclusively materialistic in purpose. Beautiful brick carvings adorned its walls, where every niche was made a receptacle for an image in prayerful attitude. It was gorgeous conception and some of its relics preserved in the Louis-Finot museum display an exquisite taste of the builder.

We cannot but say a few words on the last attempt of Champa in way of architecture. The excavations carried at Cha-ban which served as a stronghold for the final seat of the monarchs from the 11th to the 15th century have brought to light things of great interest, one of which is the Gajasimha murti mentioned above. Huge blocks of laterite bear witness to its being copiously utilised. The remains of towers demolished long ago by the Annamites indicate that stone dvarapalas kept guard side by side with armed Cham infantry. The peculiarity of these figures is that they are all painted in gaudy colours and we can imagine how the Annamese lacquer dye industry must have prospered when these images received their coats.

If the Chams ever revive their ancient culture, they will have to thank the French whose artistic temperament is equel to their zeal for reconstruction. What earned our admiration besides their efforts for piecing together a lost history out of laterite and brick debris, is their incomparable courtesy. Not only we had doors of museums and libraries open to us owing to the hospitable nature of the scholars like Dr. Goloubew, but we also received the kind attention of a Colonel without whose assistance our tour round the picturesque ruins round Nah-trang would have been impossible.

Oṃ Namaḥ Śivāya